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SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF, AF/E AND AF/RSA

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SUBJECT: INAUGURATION OF DJIBOUTI SCHOOLS REPAIRED BY
CJTF-HOA

1. (U) On September 22, Ambassador joined USAID Representative, POL/ECON and members of the Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) to inaugurate in Tadjoura and in Randa, two schools refurbished and funded by CJTF-HOA based at Camp Lemonier. Ambassador cut the ribbon with the Director of each school and delivered brief remarks to the audiences that included the regional Commissar, a representative from the Ministry of Education, Mayors, school directors, staff, and students. CJTF-HOA Chief of Staff, Colonel Craig S. Huddleston, also delivered brief statements at each event.

2. (U) Both the Tadjoura Secondary School project and the Randa Primary School project had been managed by Sergeant Charles E. Dishman of CJTF-HOA Engineers, in coordination with Major Francois Ratinaud, Djibouti Country Desk Officer for CJTF-HOA. At the Tadjoura school facility, 1,300 students, 42 teachers and 5,000 family members benefited from a project that built and repaired the school's perimeter fence, painted the interior and exterior of the fence and repaired and replaced the roof on the principal's office. The local contractor was Enterprise Abdou Ali and the project was completed at a cost of USD 24,850.

3. (U) At the Randa school facility, 315 students and 2,000 family members benefited from a project for the safety of children. CJTF-HOA built and repaired the critical retaining wall on the hillside adjacent to the school, repaired electrical wiring to classrooms enabling ceiling fans to operate, painted the interior and exterior of the school, repaired and replaced steps, and installed a roof on the principal's office. The local contractor was Golf Enterprise and the project was completed at a cost of USD 78,623.

4. (U) In remarks at both sites, the Ambassador expressed pleasure in joining her military colleagues in celebrating refurbishment of the schools. She said projects such as these assist the Government of Djibouti achieve its aims and objectives to provide constructive education programs for Djibouti's youth. America wants, as does the Government of Djibouti, to see those programs come to fruition in a physical environment that encourages learning and facilitates instruction, the Ambassador said.

5. (U) The Ambassador continued that these school projects, like others the U.S. military has undertaken on behalf of the citizens of Djibouti, will enhance the bright future of the proud Tadjoura and Randa communities. The work of the U.S. military, she added, is another example of the cooperation that is ongoing between the United States and Djibouti in education and in other fields.

6. (U) The Ambassador concluded by noting the great pride the U.S. armed forces take in the projects they complete in Djibouti -- pride that is seen in the smiles on children's faces and in the enthusiasm of the teachers in the classroom. She thanked her local hosts for welcoming her and her military colleagues and extended to both communities her best wishes for a productive and rewarding school year.

7. (U) Comment: We cannot reiterate enough the value of simple but effective projects such as those CJTF-HOA has undertaken. These quick impact undertakings are visibly appreciated by the people closest to them, especially in the rural areas. We encourage their continuation as part of the good work Camp Lemonier is doing to make a difference in individual lives here in Djibouti. End comment.

RAGSDALE